AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction apparatus for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the short film generation/reproduction apparatus comprising:

a database unit operable to store:

a still picture group including a plurality of still pictures;

a feature of each still picture included in the still picture group, the feature of each still picture being from among features identified in an expression for still pictures;

a style group including a plurality of styles indicating an outline of the video;

a feature of each style included in the style group, the feature of each style being from among features identified in an expression for styles;

a music group including a plurality of musical pieces; and

a feature of each musical piece included in the music group, the feature of each musical piece being from among features identified in an expression for music;

a selection unit operable to select a selection element used to generate a portion of the video, the selection element being selected from a selection group according to a user input, the ~~select, from only one~~ selection group being any ~~that is only~~ one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group, and the selection element selected by the selection unit being any one of ~~as a selection element used when generating the video,~~ a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a style of the plurality of styles, ~~or~~ and a musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, only from the selection group that is any one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group;

a feature reading unit operable to read out, from the database unit, the feature of the selection element selected by the selection unit;

a feature conversion unit operable to convert the feature read out by the feature reading unit into features identified in two other expressions, from among the expression for still pictures, the expression for styles, and the expression for music, the two other expressions being expressions other than the expression including the feature read out by the reading unit;

a determination unit operable to automatically determine, as two other elements used to generate a portion of the video and from only two groups of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group other than the selection group, a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, or a style of the plurality of styles ~~from each corresponding group of two groups other than the selection group from among the still picture group, the style group, and the music group~~, the two other elements being determined based on the features included in the two other expressions and resulting from the conversion by the feature conversion unit; and

a scenario generation unit operable to generate a scenario of the video, based on the selection element selected by the selection unit and the two other elements determined by the determination unit.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the feature conversion unit converts a feature of a still picture that is read out by the feature reading unit into a feature of a musical piece and a feature of a style, when the selection unit selects the still picture.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the feature conversion unit converts a feature of a musical piece that is read out by the feature reading unit into a feature of a still picture and a feature of a style, when the selection unit selects the musical piece.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the feature conversion unit converts a feature of a style that is read out by the feature reading unit into a feature of a still picture and a feature of a musical piece, when the selection unit selects the style.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1,

wherein the database unit further stores a theme of the video to be generated and a feature of the theme from among features identified in an expression for themes,

wherein the selection unit selects one of the following elements to be used when generating the video: a still picture; a musical piece; a style; and a theme, and

wherein the feature reading unit reads out, from the database unit, the feature corresponding to the element selected by the selection unit, the feature being one of the feature of the still picture, the feature of the musical piece, the feature of the style, and the feature of the theme.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein the feature conversion unit converts a feature of a theme that is read out by

the feature reading unit into a feature of a still picture, a feature of a musical piece, and a feature of a style, when the selection unit selects the theme.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a still picture obtainment unit operable to obtain a still picture; and

a picture feature extraction unit operable to extract a feature identified in the expression for still pictures from the still picture obtained by the still picture obtainment unit.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising an object information extraction unit operable to extract object information from the still picture obtained by the still picture obtainment unit, the object information being information about an object included in the still picture.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 8,

wherein the style includes (i) a predetermined number of effects specifying what kind of visual effect is used to reproduce at least one target still picture which is the still picture obtained by the still picture obtainment unit and (ii) a parameter including an attribute of the style, and

wherein the scenario generation unit associates, with each of the predetermined number of effects, the object information included in the at least one target still picture of each of the predetermined number of effects.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 9,

wherein the scenario generation unit includes:

an effect arrangement unit operable to select effects one by one from among the predetermined number of effects included in the style, and to arrange the selected effects one by one in a time domain;

a still picture assignment unit operable to assign a still picture to each of the effects arranged in the time domain by the effect arrangement unit on the basis of the object information, the still picture satisfying a picture feature required by the respective effects; and

a parameter setting unit operable to generate the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object suitable for each of the effects arranged in the time domain by the effect arrangement unit, and to store the generated scenario in the database unit.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the picture feature required by each of the effects is a feature of the object.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the feature of the object is at least one of a type of the object, a color of the object, a shape of the object, and a number of objects.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 10, further comprising a feature point extraction unit operable to extract, from the

object, a feature point indicating a characteristic part of the object, and to store the extracted feature point in the object information,

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on a position where the feature point of the object is located.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 10,

wherein the database unit further stores face information for individual authentication used to identify a face of an individual,

wherein the short film generation/reproduction apparatus further comprises a face authentication unit operable to authenticate a name of the object based on the face information and to store the authenticated name of the object in the object information, when the object extracted by the object information extraction unit is a person's face, and

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object specified by the authenticated name.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 14, further comprising:

an individual information storage unit operable to store individual information in which a name of an individual and an attribute of the individual are associated with each other; and

an individual information search unit operable to search, from the individual information, for the attribute of the individual corresponding to the name of the object authenticated by the

face authentication unit, and to store the individual attribute obtained by the search in the object information,

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object specified by the individual attribute.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1,

wherein the style includes (i) a predetermined number of effects specifying what kind of visual effect is used to reproduce one still picture which is a target of each of the predetermined number of effects and (ii) a parameter including an attribute of the style, and

wherein the scenario generation unit arranges the predetermined number of effects based on the attribute of the style and an attribute included in each of the predetermined number of effects.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 16,

wherein the predetermined number of effects is either a basic effect including only one effect or an effect block made up of a plurality of basic effects, and

wherein the scenario generation unit arranges the basic effect or the effect block, based on the attribute of the style and the attribute included in each of the predetermined number of effects.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the scenario generation unit assigns a still picture to each of the predetermined number of effects, the still picture being suitable for a type of each of the predetermined number of effects.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a short film selection unit operable to select the video to be reproduced; and

a short film reproduction unit operable to read out, from the database unit, the scenario of the video selected by the short film selection unit, and one still picture and the music defined in the scenario, and to reproduce the video based on the scenario.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 19, further comprising a display unit operable to display the video reproduced by the short film reproduction unit.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 19, further comprising an operation unit operable to operate the short film generation/reproduction apparatus and a display device for displaying the video, the display device being connected to the short film generation/reproduction apparatus,

wherein the short film reproduction unit modulates a signal obtained by reproducing the video into an RF signal so as to output the RF signal, and starts reproducing the video when a

predetermined channel button is pressed down, the channel button being included in the operation unit and being assigned the RF signal.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the short film reproduction unit switches the video being reproduced to another video, every time the channel button is pressed down.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the short film reproduction unit reproduces a plurality of videos and outputs a plurality of RF signals all at once.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 19, further comprising an operation unit operable to operate the short film generation/reproduction apparatus and a display device for displaying the video, the display device being connected to the short film generation/reproduction apparatus,

wherein the short film reproduction unit modulates a signal obtained by reproducing the video into a video signal so as to output the video signal, and starts reproducing the video when a predetermined button is pressed down, the button being included in the operation unit and being assigned the video signal.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 24, wherein the short film reproduction unit switches the video being reproduced to another video, every time the button is pressed down.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the short film generation/reproduction apparatus is a home server.

Claim 27 (Cancelled)

Claim 28 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction apparatus for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the short film generation/reproduction apparatus comprising:

a database unit operable to store a still picture, a picture feature indicating a feature of the still picture, music, a musical feature indicating a feature of the music, and an effect specifying what kind of visual effect is used to reproduce the still picture, which is a target of the effect;

a selection unit operable to select, according to a user input, only one element from any of the following elements to be used when generating the video: the still picture; and the music;

a feature reading unit operable to read out, from the database unit, the feature corresponding to the element selected by the selection unit, the feature being either the picture feature or the musical feature;

a feature conversion unit operable to convert the feature read out by the feature reading unit into another feature;

a determination unit operable to automatically determine another element, based on the other feature resulting from the conversion by the feature conversion unit;

a style generation unit operable to determine a predetermined number of effects and a parameter used to generate the video, and to generate a style indicating an outline of the video to

be generated, based on the element selected by the selection unit and the other element determined by the determination unit; and

a scenario generation unit operable to generate a scenario of the video, based on the element selected by the selection unit, the other element determined by the determination unit, and the style generated by the style generation unit.

Claim 29 (Cancelled)

Claim 30 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction apparatus for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the short film generation/reproduction apparatus comprising:

an input unit operable to obtain a still picture inputted from outside;

a database unit operable to store the at least one still picture, a style including (i) a predetermined number of effects specifying what kind of visual effect is used to reproduce the at least one still picture which is a target of each of the predetermined number of effects and (ii) a parameter, and music used for the video to be generated, and

a scenario generation unit operable to generate a scenario of the video, based on a predetermined feature of the style and a predetermined feature of the music,

wherein the input unit includes an object information extraction unit operable to automatically extract an object included in a still picture every time a still picture is inputted from outside by a user, and to store, in the database unit, object information including a position of the extracted object, and

wherein the scenario generation unit includes:

an effect arrangement unit operable to select effects one by one from among a group of effects stored in the database unit, and to arrange the selected effects one by one in a time domain;

a still picture assignment unit operable to automatically assign a still picture to each of the effects arranged in the time domain by the effect arrangement unit, each of the effects having the still picture assigned thereto based on the object information stored in the database unit, the still picture satisfying a picture feature required by the respective effects; and

a parameter setting unit operable to generate the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object suitable for each of the effects arranged in the time domain by the effect arrangement unit, and to store the generated scenario in the database unit.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 30, wherein the picture feature required by each of the effects is a feature of the object.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 31, wherein the feature of the object is at least one of a type of the object, a color of the object, a shape of the object, and a number of objects.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 30,

wherein the input unit further includes a feature point extraction unit operable to extract, from the object, a feature point indicating a characteristic part of the object, and

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on a position where the feature point of the object is located.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 30,

wherein the database unit further stores face information for individual authentication used to identify a face of an individual,

wherein the input unit further includes a face authentication unit operable to authenticate a name of the object based on the face information and to store the authenticated name of the object in the object information, when the object extracted by the object information extraction unit is a person's face, and

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object specified by the authenticated name.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented) The short film generation/reproduction apparatus according to Claim 34, further comprising an individual information storage unit operable to store individual information in which a name of an individual and an attribute of the individual are associated with each other,

wherein the input unit further includes an individual information search unit operable to search, from the individual information, for the attribute of the individual corresponding to the name of the object authenticated by the face authentication unit, and to store the individual attribute obtained by the search in the object information, and

wherein the parameter setting unit generates the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object specified by the individual attribute.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction system comprising:

a short film generation/reproduction apparatus for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video; and

a short film reproduction apparatus connected to the short film generation/reproduction apparatus via a network,

wherein the short film generation/reproduction apparatus includes:

a database unit operable to store:

a still picture group including a plurality of still pictures;

a feature of each still picture included in the still picture group, the feature of each still picture being from among features identified in an expression for still pictures;

a style group including a plurality of styles indicating an outline of the video;

a feature of each style included in the style group, the feature of each style being from among features identified in an expression for styles;

a music group including a plurality of musical pieces; and

a feature of each musical piece included in music group, the feature of each musical piece being from among features identified in an expression for music;

a selection unit operable to select a selection element used to generate a portion of the video, the selection element being selected from a selection group according to a user

input, the, ~~from only one~~ selection group being any ~~that is only~~ one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group, and the selection element selected by the selection unit being any one of ~~as a selection element used when generating the video,~~ a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a style of the plurality of styles, ~~or~~ and a musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, only from the selection group that is any one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group;

a feature reading unit operable to read out, from the database unit, the feature of the selection element selected by the selection unit;

a feature conversion unit operable to convert the feature read out by the feature reading unit into features identified in two other expressions, from among the expression for still pictures, the expression for styles, and the expression for music, the two other expressions being expressions other than the expression including the feature read out by the reading unit;

a determination unit operable to automatically determine, as two other the elements used to generate a portion of the video and from only two groups of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group other than the selection group, a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, or a style of the plurality of styles ~~from each corresponding group of two groups other than the selection group from among the still picture group, the style group, and the music group~~, the two other elements being determined based on the features included in the two other expressions and resulting from the conversion by the feature conversion unit;

a scenario generation unit operable to generate a scenario of the video, based on the selection element selected by the selection unit and the two other elements determined by the determination unit; and

a first communication unit operable to read out, from the database unit, the scenario of the video selected by the short film reproduction apparatus, and the still picture and the music defined in the scenario, and to send the read-out scenario, the still picture and the music to the short film reproduction apparatus via the network, and

wherein the short film reproduction apparatus includes:

a short film selection unit operable to select the video to be reproduced;

a second communication unit operable to communicate with the short film generation/reproduction apparatus via the network;

a storage unit operable to temporarily store the scenario of the video, and the still picture and the music defined in the scenario, which are sent by the short film generation/reproduction apparatus;

a short film reproduction unit operable to read out, from the storage unit of the short film reproduction apparatus, the scenario of the video selected by the short film selection unit, and the still picture and the music defined in the scenario, and to reproduce the video based on the scenario; and

a display unit operable to display the video reproduced by the short film reproduction unit.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction method for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the short film generation/reproduction method comprising:

a selection step of selecting a selection element used to generate a portion of the video, the selection element being selected from a selection group according to a user input, the~~, from~~

~~only one~~ selection group being any ~~that is only~~ one of a still picture group, a style group, and a music group, and the selection element selected by the selection step being any one of ~~as a selection element used to generate the video,~~ a still picture of a plurality of still pictures, a style of a plurality of styles, ~~or~~ and a musical piece of a plurality of musical pieces, only from the selection group that is any one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group, wherein the selection is ~~being~~ performed using a database that stores (i) the still picture group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of still pictures, (ii) a feature of each still picture included in the still picture group, the feature of each still picture being from among features identified in an expression for still pictures, (iii) the style group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of styles indicating an outline of the video, (iv) a feature of each style included in the style group, the feature of each style being from among features identified in an expression for styles, (v) the music group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of musical pieces, and (vi) a feature of each musical piece included in the music group, the feature of each musical piece being from among features identified in an expression for music;

a feature reading step of reading out, from the database, the feature of the selection element selected in the selection step;

a feature conversion step of converting the feature read out in the feature reading step into features identified in two other expressions, from among the expression for still pictures, the expression for styles, and the expression for music, the two other expressions being expressions other than the expression including the feature read out in the feature reading step;

a determination step of automatically determining, as two other elements used to generate a portion of the video and from only two groups of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group other than the selection group, a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a

musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, or a style of the plurality of styles ~~from each corresponding group of two groups other than the selection group from among the still picture group, the style group, and the music group~~, the two other elements being determined based on the features included in the two other expressions and resulting from the conversion in the feature conversion step; and

a scenario generation step of generating a scenario of the video, based on the selection element selected in the selection step and the two other elements determined in the determination step.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended) A short film generation/reproduction method for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the short film generation/reproduction method comprising:

an input step of obtaining a still picture inputted from outside; and

a scenario generation step of generating a scenario of the video, based on a predetermined feature of a style indicating an outline of the video to be generated and based on a predetermined feature of music to be used to generate the video,

wherein the input step includes an object information extraction step of automatically extracting an object included in a still picture every time a still picture is inputted from outside, and generating object information including a position of the extracted object, and

wherein the scenario generation step includes:

an effect arrangement step of selecting effects one by one from among a group of effects, and arranging the selected effects one by one in a time domain;

a still picture assignment step of automatically assigning a still picture to each of the effects arranged in the time domain in the effect arrangement step, each of the effects having the still picture assigned thereto based on the object information, the still picture satisfying a picture feature required by the respective effects; and

a parameter setting step of generating the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object suitable for each of the effects arranged in the time domain in the effect arrangement step.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended) A program for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the program causing a computer to execute the following steps:

a selection step of selecting a selection element used to generate a portion of the video, the selection element being selected from a selection group according to a user input, the~~, from only one~~ selection group being any ~~that is only~~ one of a still picture group, a style group, and a music group, and the selection element selected by the selection step being any one of ~~as a selection element used to generate the video,~~ a still picture of a plurality of still pictures, a style of a plurality of styles, ~~or~~ and a musical piece of a plurality of musical pieces, only from the selection group that is any one of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group, wherein the selection is ~~being~~ performed using a database that stores (i) the still picture group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of still pictures, (ii) a feature of each still picture included in the still picture group, the feature of each still picture being from among features identified in an expression for still pictures, (iii) the style group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of styles indicating an outline of the video, (iv) a feature of each style included in the style group,

the feature of each style being from among features identified in an expression for styles, (v) the music group including the ~~that includes a~~ plurality of musical pieces, and (vi) a feature of each musical piece included in the music group, the feature of each musical piece being from among features identified in an expression for music;

a feature reading step of reading out, from the database, the feature of the selection element selected in the selection step;

a feature conversion step of converting the feature read out in the feature reading step into features identified in two other expressions, from among the expression for still pictures, the expression for styles, and the expression for music, the two other expressions being expressions other than the expression including the feature read out in the feature reading step;

a determination step of automatically determining, as two other elements used to generate a portion of the video and from only two groups of the still picture group, the style group, and the music group other than the selection group, a still picture of the plurality of still pictures, a musical piece of the plurality of musical pieces, or a style of the plurality of styles ~~from each corresponding group of two groups other than the selection group from among the still picture group, the style group, and the music group~~, the two other elements being determined based on the features included in the two other expressions and resulting from the conversion in the feature conversion step; and

a scenario generation step of generating a scenario of the video, based on the selection element selected in the selection step and the two other elements determined in the determination step.

Claim 40 (Currently Amended) A program for generating a video using at least one still picture and reproducing the video, the program causing a computer to execute the following steps:

an input step of obtaining a still picture inputted from outside; and

a scenario generation step of generating a scenario of the video, based on a predetermined feature of a style indicating an outline of the video to be generated and based on a predetermined feature of music to be used to generate the video,

wherein the input step includes an object information extraction step of automatically extracting an object included in a still picture every time a still picture is inputted from outside, and generating object information including a position of the extracted object, and

wherein the scenario generation step includes:

an effect arrangement step of selecting effects one by one from among a group of effects, and arranging the selected effects one by one in a time domain;

a still picture assignment step of automatically assigning a still picture to each of the effects arranged in the time domain in the effect arrangement step, each of the effects having the still picture assigned thereto based on the object information, the still picture satisfying a picture feature required by the respective effects; and

a parameter setting step of generating the scenario by describing a parameter indicating processing to be performed on the object suitable for each of the effects arranged in the time domain in the effect arrangement step.